



Object of the Newsletter

To promote the appreciation of fine Scotch Whisky, the area from which it comes, the people that inhabit the land and it's history. By the way, I do not profess to be an expert, I am merely expressing an opinion on the whiskies I am tasting.

I now consider the Cragganmore Distiller's edition double matured "Port wood finish". That is one helluva name for a bottle of whisky, it almost sounds like one of the "Kings (or Queens) in game of Thrones". Is a mouthful of this scotch worth the mouthful of words you have to utter to get the barman to pour you a dram? In a word, yes.

Cragganmore distillery only use 300 casks each year which are filled into used port pipes (Spanish oak) for a further 6-18 months maturation. This finishing adds further complexity to what was already a nice Speyside whisky with additional fruit notes.

If you are wondering what this extra finishing does, think of the Glenmorangie 10-year-old having an extra 2 years in a port pipe and becoming "Quinta Ruban". I find this whisky to have similar flavor profiles, although, perhaps a little lighter in flavor.

Yes, this is more expensive than the Glenmorangie, and it's less easy to find but, if you find it, I would recommend you buy it, it is a nice whisky.

You can buy Cragganmore "Port wood finish" for around \$80.00 a bottle.

Tasting Notes

Nose - Plum & raisin

Palate - Cherry, chocolate & raisin

Finish - Grape jelly & anise

"Slainte Mhath"

Paul Bissett





Cragganmore

Cragganmore is owned by the Diagio company with the distillery situated in the village of Ballindalloch in Banffshire, Scotland. The Cragganmore whisky is one of their 6 Classic malt series. The distillery was founded in 1869 by John Smith with the site chosen for available waters of the Craggan burn (stream) and because it was close to the Strathspey railway.

John Smith was an experienced distiller and manager of distilleries, having worked at the Glenfarclas, Glenlivet, Macallan and Wishaw distilleries. For those of you that have walked/hiked the long-distance Speyside way, a large part of this used to be the Strathspey Railway.

The San Francisco World Spirits competition awarded the Cragganmore 10-year-old (Sherry Cask) with a double gold medal in 2005. While the 12-year-old received two double gold, one gold and three silver medals between 2005 and 2012.

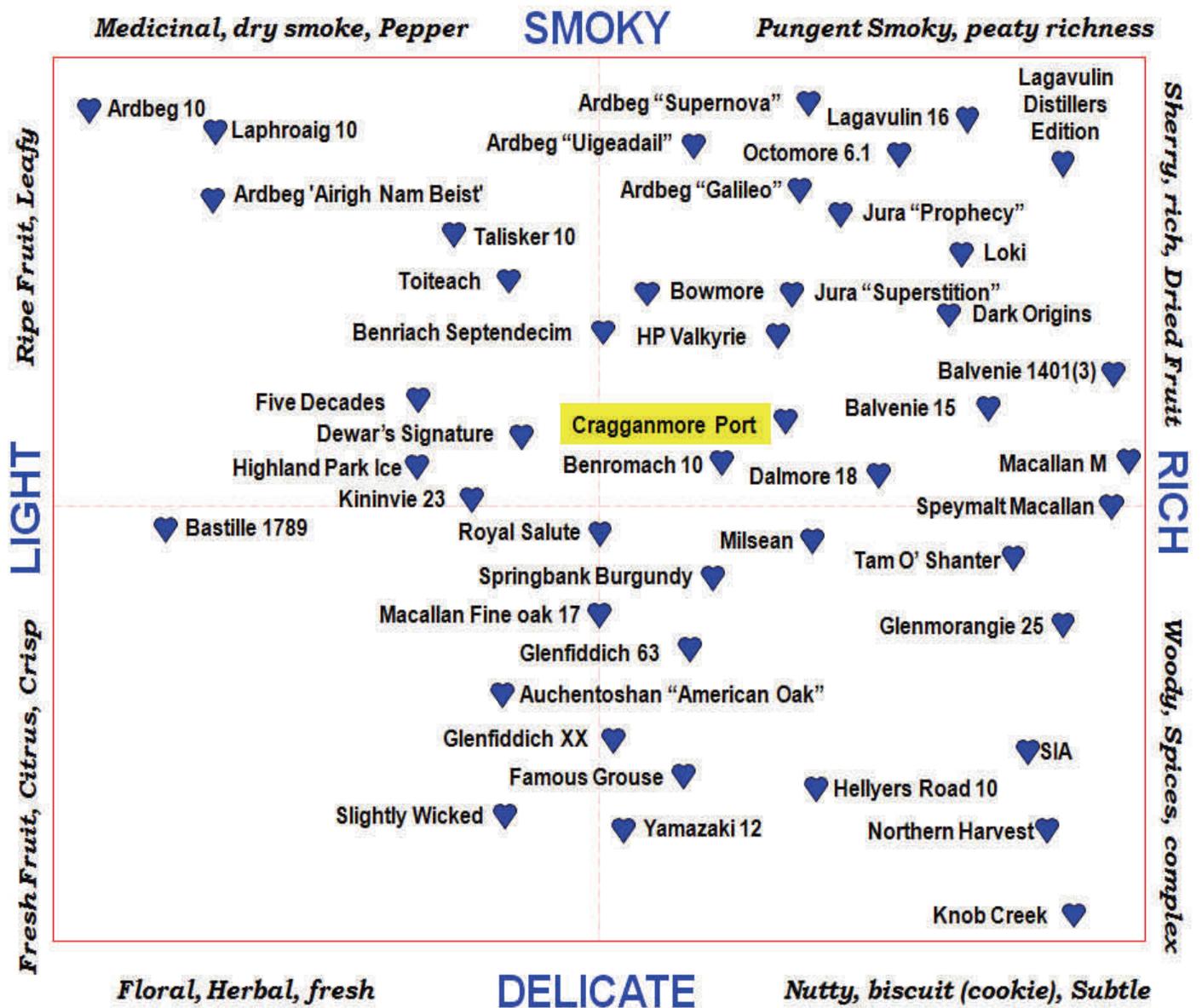
The Cragganmore single malt is a very complex Speyside whisky, which most people will not have come across, because of the limited supply produced by this small distillery. According to "Discovering Distillery's", the Cragganmore's unique flat topped spirit stills and the slow condensing in traditional wooden worm-tubs, helps promote Cragganmore's complexity.



Cragganmore Distillery



Below is a simple guide to help you choose your single malt Whisky, and the flavor notes you should expect from it. Being Scottish I recommend you find a likely candidate and try it in a bar before buying the whole bottle. This Issue; Cragganmore Distiller's edition double matured "port wood finish". For more information on Cragganmore go to www.malts.com/en-gb/distilleries/cragganmore





Scientists reveal why whisky tastes better with water

by Hannah Devlin

How best to enjoy whisky has long been debated, but two chemists say they have discovered why diluting your dram might make it taste better

Neat, on the rocks or with a dash of water? It's long been a controversial decision.

Neat, on the rocks, or with a dash of mineral water. Whisky enthusiasts have long disagreed about how the amber nectar is best enjoyed, but now a scientific paper has backed the idea that diluting whisky can enhance its flavour.

The work suggests that adding water boosts the concentration of flavour compounds at the surface of the drink, helping to unleash the rich mix of aromas.

The science and art of whisky making

Björn Karlsson, a chemist at Linnæus University in Sweden and the paper's co-author, said: "What came out from our study is that adding water to whisky should make it taste better."

Karlsson and his co-author, Ran Friedman, had come across the idea that adding water to whisky improved the taste and aroma. "Neither of us are big whisky drinkers," he said. "But we were interested in the chemistry."

To investigate why adding water could intensify flavour, rather than the reverse, they developed a simple computational model to look at the interactions of water, ethanol – whisky's two basic ingredients – and a flavour compound called guaiacol that comes from the charred oak casks used to mature Scotch and has a characteristically sweet, smoky flavour.

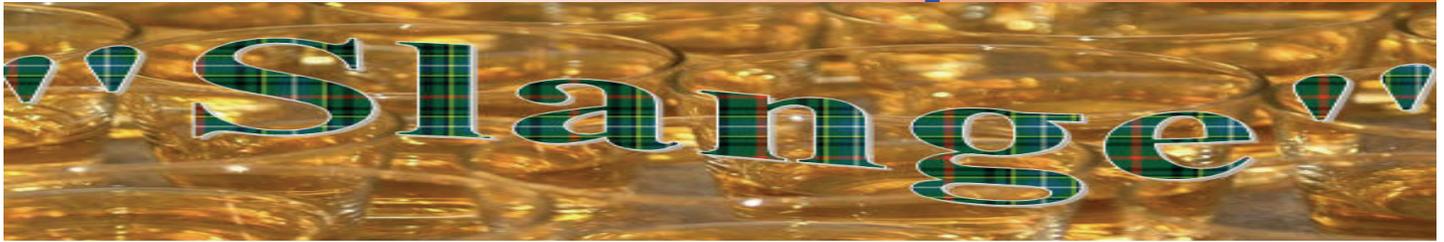
Despite including just three chemicals, Karlsson said the interplay is fairly complex. One end of the ethanol molecule is attracted to water, while the other end is repelled.

This means that at very low concentrations, ethanol accumulates at the surface, where molecules can roughly align themselves in their preferred direction, with the water-repelling side facing upwards towards the air.

Above a certain concentration, the ethanol cannot all fit at the surface and so it escapes down into the bulk of the liquid, but still clusters into pockets. The guaiacol is more strongly attracted to the ethanol than the water meaning that the alcohol concentration determines how much of it is found near the top of the glass.

In the distillery, cask strength whisky, which can be more than 60% alcohol by volume, is typically diluted to 40-45%.

The new paper, published in the journal *Scientific reports*, showed that diluting a whisky from 45% to 27% boosted the density of guaiacol at the surface by more than one third. Other flavour compounds are known to have similar behaviours, Karlsson said, meaning that the findings could explain the benefits of adding water.



Scientists reveal why whisky tastes better with water

Cont.

Karlsson said that bottling a whisky at a higher concentration than is optimal in terms of taste also made sense because this would help prevent flavour compounds escaping into the bottle's headspace, where they would waft away on opening.

Matthew Pauley, an assistant professor at the International Centre for Brewing and Distilling at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, said he would like to see the findings put to a taste test to see whether the model could predict the exact sweet spot for dilution.

Pauley said that to "take apart" a whisky's taste, he favoured the industry standard of diluting to 20%. "It's all very well doing it on a computational model," he said. "I'm not pooh-poohing the results, but I'd like to do the test."

Pauley said that scientific research on whiskies was welcome as it helped strip away "pretentious" myths about the drink. "It's about breaking down the barriers and saying 'we do this because of X, Y or Z'," he said.

David Williamson, of the Scotch Whisky Association, said that adding water also helps prevent an overwhelming taste of alcohol masking more delicate, complex flavours. "The other factor is ... reducing the alcohol sensation on the nose and tongue," he said.

Karlsson said he and colleagues had not yet put the findings to a taste test, but added that, having turned 40 recently, he now had an ample selection of Japanese and Scotch whiskies to work with. "After this attention we've got, it seems like I'm more or less forced to drink it," he said.

